1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

Further, it is necessary to correct some errors that have crept into the literature concerning Timbira hairdressing. Notwithstanding assertions by Kissenberth and Snethlage,[305] who oddly agree on this, the Canella never cut their hair in mourning; the exact contrary holds, as demonstrated in plate 7, *b*. Moreover, as proved by dozens of my pictures, women and children dress the hair in exactly the same fashion as the men; Snethlage thus errs in declaring that they merely comb their hair away from the face or cut it above the forehead. Oil paintings by the Dutch artist Eckhout which are in the National Museum of Copenhagen suggest that the Otuhukayana of Rio Grande do Norte also wore the hair furrow in the seventeenth century. (See pl. 21.) The occipital hair of the Timbira is never braided into a pigtail; a little grass fanlike ornament (hivakúi) (pl. 20, *b*) merely serves to ligature the bunch of occipital hair. A person with very long hair may gather it together, lay the tip up on the back of the head, and secure it there with string. However, this custom—like the use of the hivakúi—is peculiar to men about to engage in a particularly difficult undertaking—formerly, above all when going to battle; and as soon as anyone is seen indulging in the practice he is immediately questioned by everybody as to his plans.

No man's hair is cut by another. The task devolves primarily on his mother, his sisters, female cousins and nieces; his wife may tend to the matter provided it is not a ceremonial cut at the close of a period of mourning or seclusion. Because of this rule men who have been away for a long time have the furrow completely obliterated by the new growth of hair. On their begging trips, however, they usually fall into the hands of some civilized barber who spoils their coiffure for the period of several months.

No attention is paid to the clipped hair, which they either allow to lie about or throw on the garbage, for the Eastern Timbira and the Apinayé do not share the widespread Indian belief that fragments severed from the body can be used in sorcery. On the other hand, the Rąmkõ'kamekra believe that a person who has secured another's hair from the temples thereby is certain of being loved by him or her, for which reason such hair is sometimes clipped clandestinely. The hair cut from women's occiputs at certain festivals is united in a long bundle and hung on a tree in front of the village, whence I was able to carry it off at will. Several times I received the present of a neck-and-forehead ornament consisting of hair tufts mounted brushlike in feather quills or small bamboo tubes.

The Canella have double combs (koiké) composed of little rods (pl. 20, *a*), but today they serve only ceremonial purposes; a norm based on the length of the rods is used in the manufacturing. For practical purposes these combs have been superseded by those of European and Neobrazilian make, but several men, for example, chief Ropką', are themselves able to produce such modern combs out of horn, and these prove far more durable than the purchased articles, which very soon lose their tines in the thick Indian hair.

The people pay a fair amount of attention to their hair. They wash it while bathing by rubbing it between the palms of their hands, and oil it with the oleaginous juice of chewed babassu seeds, which is spat into their hands and then rubbed on the hair. The very greasy beetle larvae that live within the seeds are crushed between the palms and then also used for oiling the hair. Head lice (ikó) occur, especially among children, but have long ceased to be general. I am positive that a considerable number of adults lack them. Anyone becoming aware of lice has his wife or some kinswoman look for them; this person puts them on the palm of her hands

[305] Kissenberth, Bei den Canella-Indianern, 48. Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 148.

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there are wooden forks with from two to five tines for drawing parallel lines. Further, there are four distinct types of stamps: (1) For dots. For dotted lines the forks or similar implements are used; dots forming stars, rectangles, etc., are stamped with the ends of appropriately carved rods. (2) Round stamps, mainly for star-shaped designs, generally consist of halved palm (especially babassu) nuts and are most commonly used. An ingenious woman utilized her husband's ear disks, which had a Maltese cross in openwork. (3) Stamps for stripes. These usually consist of a plano-convex piece of burity leafstalk, the level surface being carved with the designs, while the convex side has two excised parts opposite each other which aid the fingers in manipulating the implement. Other stamps of this category are of hardwood and of rectangular section, with a different pattern on each side. Sometimes a grip projects in the direction of the axis on each narrow face of such four-plane stamps. (4) Roller stamps, of cylindrical form with spindle. They may quite possibly be aboriginal, for the racing logs called pę'rakahą'k exhibit the same form.

Notwithstanding the extensive development of body paint, the ornamentation marks social units only in a few cases. Thus, each of the plaza groups paints those of its members graduating from the second phase of initiation with a special pattern at the terminal celebration; and the rainy season moieties are recognizable by their paint. On the other hand, the exogamous moieties, the age classes, and the festive organizations lack distinctive paint, except for the leader and the girl associates of the Jaguar society.

Gluing of down and paty wool.—Falcon down is glued on the body exclusively for ceremonial decoration (pl. 7, *c*), being obligatory at a number of solemn procedures, whereas no one ever has himself decorated with feathers for his personal pleasure. At the close of the ketúaye and the pepkahą'k seclusion all participants are ornamented with falcon down. At other terminal solemnities and outstanding ceremonies it is as a rule the officiating members of the hąmrén who are thus distinguished. Above all, the tamhą'k at their great ceremony during the pepkahą'k festival all appear with the falcon-down decoration reserved for their use. Further, at the end of the mourning period for a deceased or absent tribesman, or after prolonged and serious illness, the hąmrén present themselves in their down ornamentation before the councilors in the plaza; the corpse of the hąmrén is similarly honored. Whenever the hąmrén are thus decorated, each cheek bears two small black triangles in close juxtaposition, the pigment being derived from almecega rosin and pulverized charcoal.

The ketúaye initiation and the pepkahą'k festival require the simultaneous decoration of some thirty persons with falcon down, hence special hunting trips have to be arranged in order to obtain the necessary quantity. The Indians then set the steppe afire, the smoke enticing the falcons, whose down is subsequently stowed away in small, narrow-mouthed gourd vessels, from which it is extricated with a little rod.

I know of but a single instance of parrot down as a substitute for that of a falcon. Oddly enough, this happened in the case of a little boy impersonating a young falcon.

The down is glued on by a hąpín (p. 102), invariably in the wearer's maternal house, to the chanting of the operator, who receives a present for his labor. The solitary exception occurs at ketúaye, the novices being decorated by members of their plaza unit (menkąčą). Before the operation the subject's hair is always trimmed.

768 After the husband's death the widow and her-
886 children are shielded from want by her brothers and sisters. A widower normally returns to his mother's house. He is really the one more deserving of pity, especially after decades of wedlock, when he is too old to remarry. Accordingly, two old widowers with adult daughters did not take the trouble to move to their matrilineal home, but for the rest of their lifetime remained with their girls. On the other hand, young widowers who contemplate remarriage leave the house of the deceased a few days after the death even if there should be issue. However, father and children visit each other, the former occasionally bringing the youngsters a gift consisting of victuals and in turn being entertained by them.

585 When a man moves into his mother-in-law's home, his social position alters only
571 with reference to this new relationship to the inmates of the house and to his age class in so far as he ceases to sleep with the bachelors in the plaza. Otherwise his social activities hardly suffer any change; of the many social units with which he is affiliated only the family takes cognizance of the cleavage between married and single men.

591 Strictly speaking, a husband cannot be said to "move" from his maternal to
593 his mother-in-law's home; he rather becomes a member of two households simultaneously, and I have always had the impression that he feels the bond with his mother's house as far closer than with his wife's. This is quite natural since the former is indestructible, while the latter may be dissolved any day. For example, a married man continues to turn over part of his game to his mother's household or has his wife do so. Either alone or in the company of his wife he will often spend a part of the day with his mother, who prepares food for both spouses. Usually a man also keeps part of his personal belongings at his mother's—if for no other reason, in order to preserve them from encroachments by his brothers-in-law. Further, as indicated above, a man who falls seriously ill goes back to his [764] mother's, usually with his wife, to remain there till his recovery. If it is at all possible, a Timbira dies at his mother's house, where the corpse is invariably laid out.

604 At his mother's a man always is respected and decisively influences his sister's
[726] children, for whose support he is in part responsible in an emergency. His role in a niece's marriage has been noted; anciently, a nephew was his preordained companion in a raid against enemies and preceded him in an attack.

664 After the official council session and the subsequent chat in the plaza, that is,
512 about 7:30 P.M., the dignitaries and their male auditors by no means depart
593 straightaway to their wives, each rather regularly betaking himself to his matrilineal home, where he is an expected guest at that hour. As soon as he has seated himself there on a bed, his mother, sister, or niece serves him some food that has always been previously prepared for him. Not until he has eaten and uttered his opinion on family affairs does he leave for his wife's home.

MOURNING

765 Whenever a married Indian goes on a protracted journey—say, a begging jaunt
484 to one of the coastal state capitals—his wife goes into a mourner's seclusion until
593 his return. This retreat differs from that customary after a death only through the lack of lamentation and its possibly much greater duration. The woman ceases to cut her hair and to paint herself, puts on no decorative object, does not appear publicly, holds conversation only with her house mates, and rarely leaves her platform bed. Kentapí thus mourned over her absent husband from the beginning of August, 1930, until the beginning of April, 1931. Snr. Marcellino Miranda, the

965 484 593 Indian agent at Barra do Corda, was astounded at this behavior when he came to the village, utilizing the occasion to give the girl, then thirteen or fourteen years old, news received of her husband. Contrary to his expectations, she at first refused to leave her partitioned retreat within the house; when he called her, she got her mother to beg him to speak while she listened behind the partition. The agent, whose curiosity was now aroused, insisted on her coming out, whereupon she finally appeared at the exit, supported by her mother. Her long hair was hanging down over her face; for a moment she remained standing silent, with her eyes lowered, then retreated again. In view of the news he was bringing the agent had of course expected a jubilant welcome.

I photographed Kentapí at the time, as well as three days after her husband's return, when she presented herself to the councilors in the plaza, wearing the down decoration to which her status as a pepkahák-kničwę'i, hence also a hąmrén, entitled her (pl. 7, *b*, *c*). No one would recognize that these pictures represent the same individual. Her husband, a tamhą'k, hence also down-decorated, stepped out of his sisters' house carrying a meat pie in his arms, and Kentapí then appeared at the door of her own dwelling, directly opposite. Both simultaneously walked along their respective radial paths to the plaza, two old men rose, went to meet them, took their meat pies, divested them of their decoration, and let them return to their houses.

When Kentapí's husband returned from his trip, he had first of all entered his sister's house and seated himself on a mat that had been spread for him in the antechamber. At once all his older kinswomen, as well as his mother-in-law, appeared to greet him singly or in pairs by way of the weeping salutation. It was not until the completion of this ceremony and after having eaten food offered by his sisters that Kentapí's sister, who had remained sitting by her mother at the door, said to him, "Kentapí calls you." He then went ahead of the two women across the plaza and to Kentapí's house, where she was seated on the platform bed in the partitioned space. She grasped him by the shoulders, put her forehead against his, and said, weeping, "You have been away so long, I have been so sorry for you." For all Timbira are convinced that the only spot in the world where it is possible to lead a life worthy of a human being is their native village.

[576]

In 1935 Kentapí again went into mourning—though not even approximately of the same strictness—for her brother Pędnhi, who was traveling about; once more her forehead hair grew down to the tip of her nose.

765 152 For a dead person mourning lasts at least a month. A widow who should have an affair prior to this period would be publicly censured. The only veritable row I witnessed among these people was when a widow got herself a lover hardly a week after her husband's death. Pųrãkwéi, the dead man's and my sister, called her names for nearly a quarter of an hour on the boulevard, shouting and threatening to kill her; in fact, she came to me in search of a weapon for the purpose. In her wrath she drew upon the Portuguese stock of vituperative terms, for her own tongue is obviously very poor in this respect.

[831]

Externally mourning involves a more or less strict seclusion and letting the hair grow, the latter being invariably observed by the survivors on the death of siblings, parents, parents' siblings, grandparents, and spouses. Another manifestation, and a very obtrusive one, is the daily lament over and above the expression of grief during the funeral (p. 133 ff.); indeed, in the period immediately after death it occurs several times a day. This observance is restricted to adults and practiced incomparably oftener by women than by men. The mourner no sooner recalls the

1: Nimuendaju R-S (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

deceased than she quite suddenly falls to blubbering rhythmically for several minutes. Such lamentation is indispensable if some tribesman arrives whom the mourner has not seen since her loss or who has been away for some time. In the latter case—as whenever I myself return—another idea coöperates: sympathy with the homecoming traveler, who is supposed to have been exposed to all manner of privations, maltreatment, and dangers during his absence. He seats himself on the mat as described above, his kinswomen lay their heads or arms against his shoulder and bawl in the way indicated, actually shedding tears, and some of them working themselves into a profound state of excitement. On one occasion a mother gave vent to sentiments of despondent grief when she caught sight of a feather ornament given me by her daughter, who had died during my absence.

During major festivals lamentations of this sort are always to be heard emanating from some house or other: The inmates remember some dead relative who would have played a part in the present proceedings if still alive or recall a child on whom the role should have devolved. At major log races I have several times seen some age class throw down the log and then at once trot over to the maternal home of their deceased champion runner in order to join his relatives in bewailing him.

DIVISION OF LABOR

As superficial observers are wont to do, Fróes Abreu alleges that Rąmkõ'kamekra men lead a life of idleness while women labor.[179] As stated in the relevant sections, all hard work—the clearing of woods, hunting, war—devolves solely on the men, who moreover take part in a series of supplementary activities. It is true that the development of agriculture, the recession of the chase, and the elimination of war have increased feminine work and diminished masculine obligations. On the other hand, women hardly gather wild fruits any more and the construction of more substantial houses, along with the rise of a by no means insignificant home industry has added to masculine labor. Abreu declares that the women manufacture baskets and mats (p. 180), yet pictures a matmaking man (p. 58)! His statement holds only for certain special types of basketry; others and also mats, the most important article for trade, are never made by women. Burity mats, large, rectangular food bags and lidded suspension pouches are for the most part of Rąmkõ'kamekra, in small measure of Apą'nyekra, provenience. They are found in pretty nearly all houses of the central interior of Maranhão and especially in the shops of Barra do Cordo. This industry fails to develop more rapidly for the solitary reason that all trading between the Rąmkõ'kamekra and the whites is aimed at mutual cheating.

The most one can say is that as the children's caretaker and the sole laborer at domestic chores woman is more constantly employed than man. In any case she is far too independent by virtue of her social status to turn into an idle husband's beast of labor.

DIVORCE

Only a few reasons warrant the rupture of marriage with a virgin—barrenness, grave maltreatment, and adultery. As for the first-mentioned ground, I know of only one case, and even there I gained the impression that the wife's sterility was a pretext rather than the real reason. Excessive abuse of a woman led to divorce in a few instances, all of them the result of alcoholism. Adultery on either side is the commonest reason, though, as among the Apinayé, many spouses are willing to overlook a mate's straying from the narrow path. However, Abreu exaggerates beyond all reason in alleging that "as Canellos desconhecem a fidelidade conjugal"

[179] Fróes Abreu, Terra das Palmeiras, 179.

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764 596 chief Ropkᵱ', and opposite him chief Kukrãčᵱ', who calls Ropkᵱ' his uncle, was delivering the funeral oration. When the women put the corpse on Ropkᵱ''s lap he began to cry aloud and desperately, while Kukrãčᵱ' rose and went to the plaza to arrange for the digging of the grave. In the meantime the boy's maternal uncle who was to have transferred his name to the child arrived on the scene, likewise took the corpse on his lap, and fell to crying violently. Kentapí called my attention to the fact that neither she nor her mother took hold of the corpse lest the child of her sister Iromkré, who was still in her lying-in retreat, should cry constantly.

764 616 In the plaza the chief asks who wishes to dig the grave. A volunteer always comes forward, but it must not be a member of the dead man's exogamous moiety. The mode of remunerating his and the corpse decorators' services has been described (p. 102).

[765] 764 177 Formerly, when secondary burial was still in vogue, the deceased was first buried behind his mother's home, except for a hąmren (p. 98). When I visited the Krahô' in 1930, these Indians seemed to have still maintained the custom of burial behind the house; the Rąmkõ'kamekra of today would at most follow it in the case of an infant.

The grave is more or less 2 meters in depth. Formerly it was round, and the corpse was put in there in a sitting posture, facing east.[266] At present, at least among the Rąmkõ'kamekra, the grave is exclusively rectangular, the corpse lying extended on its back.

764 766 If the death occurs in the morning, the burial takes place in the evening; if a person dies in the evening, he is buried the following morning and there is an all-night lament near the corpse. If the deceased man's prominence draws many related persons to the spot, a kinsman kills a pig, which is hurriedly prepared for the entertainment of those present. Part of the food is then put in a gourd for the dead man, an elderly woman several times holding a morsel close to his mouth.

The mats on which the corpse rests are folded over it and tied firmly at both ends and in the middle. Then the bundle is hung to a pole, which two men carry to the cemetery—at present from one and a half to two kilometers from the village. A few additional mats are taken along for the adjustment of the grave. None of the Timbira tribes throws earth directly on the corpse, as reported for the Põrekamekra by Pohl, who does not, however, seem to have attended a funeral; and the grave described by Ribeiro was presumably not a Timbira's, as he assumes, but that of a Gamella of Vianna.[267] The opening of the grave is covered with transversely laid pieces of wood, which are topped with mats before heaping up earth. Lest the heat of the sun annoy the deceased, twigs and palm fronds are put on this mound; sometimes the grave is fenced with old racing logs to keep out roaming domestic pigs. (See pl. 26, *b*).

At least nowadays there are no funeral deposits except that a woman's carrying basket may be laid on her mound along with a gourd bowl, her spindle, and the like.

The next of kin never accompany the corpse to its grave, but remain seated in the house of mourning, weeping probably another half hour at the empty spot where it had been resting. Then they have themselves sprinkled with water in front of the house "in order to remove the dead man's perspiration," a service which is paid for. The house and the space before it are always swept.

775 171 Like the Apinayé,[268] the Canella believe that the shadow of a person who dies "hungry," that is, has not for some time prior to his demise taken any food, will return to his mother's home in search of sustenance. Their procedure is quite like

[266] Pohl, Reise, 2:197. Snethlage, Nordostbras, 173.
[267] Pohl, Reise, 2:197. Ribeiro, Memoria, § 26–28.
[268] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 132.

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a

765
J37
302

b

c

ROUND HUT; GIRL MOURNER; SAME WITH FALCON-DOWN DRESS

/47 cont./

302 The Herculean-built brother-in-law of the village chief
765 is among them. His head is /48/ shaved. According to tribal custom he had taken his head hair as an offering to the grave of his recently deceased wife (1).

[171] [101] 1. I observed the same custom among the Mẽkubengokrä Kayapo, to the west of the sierra of Conceição do Araguaia, in whose villages I stayed in 1909.

123 [203] The news of my imminent arrival had already been announced in the village. So it came about that I, with my companion, rode into Suridade accompanied by a stately procession. [361] In the village, which is built circularly -- i e., all the huts lie [622] in a circle, the radius of which is about 100 meters -- I was taken [342] immediately to the hut of the chief, Manoel José de Santo Vaqueiro, which is not distinguished from the other nine huts by any externally visible feature.

123 622 576 [648] The chief had received the rank of major from the government and obviously put /illustration appears here/ great value on the form of address due him. My first query as to whether the "chefe da aldeia" /head of the village/ were present in the house seemed not to correspond to the customary local ritual. The alteration of my question to "Aqui está a casa do 'major' Vaqueiro /Is this the house of Major Vaqueiro/?" had, however, the immediate result of a reply, "estou prompto" /this is it/, uttered rapidly several times.

And at once the ruler of the village emerged from under the low entrance, in front of which lay a large log of wood.

622 292 And how he looked! He had clad himself in his most elegant finery.

A black dinner-jacket hung loosely against white trousers on his thin figure.

On his head sat a colored double-peaked soldier's cap, which, as he recounted with a pompous air, had been bestowed upon him by the governor as a badge of his rank --